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DOL FOR BLS AND ILAB
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SUBJECT: EU-27 AND EURO ZONE UNEMPLOYMENT DOWN TO 7.1 PERCENT

¶1. SUMMARY. The aggregate unemployment rate for both the EU-27 and the euro zone (the thirteen EU countries participating in the euro) were down to 7.1 percent in April 2007, according to data published by the EU Commission's Statistical Office (EUROSTAT) on June 1. END SUMMARY.

¶2. With seasonal adjustment and compensation for differences in national statistical methods, the EU-27 unemployment rate stood at 7.1 percent in April 2007, down from 7.2 percent in March 2007 (revised downward from initial 7.3 percent estimate) and down from 8.0 percent in April 2006. The unemployment rate for the euro zone also stood at 7.1 percent in April 2007, again down from 7.2 percent in March and from 8.0 percent in April 2006.

¶3. The lowest rates compiled from the EU-27 for April 2007 were recorded in the Netherlands (3.3 percent), Denmark (3.4 percent in March) and Ireland (4.0 percent). The highest rates were recorded in Poland (11.2 percent) and Slovakia (10.5 percent), though the unemployment rate in both countries continues its steady decline.

¶4. EUROSTAT noted that twenty-two countries among the EU-27 recorded a decrease in their unemployment rate over a year, four an increase and one recorded no change. The most significant decreases (April-to-April comparison) occurred in Estonia (from 6.3 percent to 4.7 percent), Slovenia (from 6.4 percent to 4.8 percent), and Slovakia (from 13.8 percent to 10.5 percent). The highest relative increases were recorded in Hungary (from 7.3 percent to 8.2 percent) and Portugal (from 7.6 percent to 8.0 percent).

¶5. Based on EUROSTAT estimates, male unemployment reached 6.3 percent in April 2007 for the EU-27 and 5.9 percent for the euro zone, down by 1.0 percentage point in both areas when compared to April 2006. The female rate over the same period decreased to 8.2 percent (minus 0.7 percentage point) for the EU-27 and to 8.6 percent (minus 0.7 percentage point) for the euro zone.

¶6. Unemployment rates among young people under 25 (April 2007 estimates, unless otherwise noted) ranged from 5.9 percent in the Netherlands, 6.6 percent in Denmark (March 2007) and 7.6 percent in Ireland to 25.5 percent in Greece (fourth quarter of 2006), 23.0 percent in Poland, and 22.0 percent in Slovakia. The rate for this age group in April 2007 was estimated at 16.1 percent for the EU-27 and 15.7 percent for the euro zone, compared to 17.6 percent (minus 1.5 percentage point) and 16.7 percent (minus 1.0 percentage point) respectively in April 2006.

¶7. EUROSTAT estimated that 16.7 million were unemployed in the EU-27 in April 2007 (10.6 million in the euro zone). Following is the breakdown of unemployment rates in ascending order for the individual EU member states:

(Seasonally-adjusted)
(April 2007 unless otherwise indicated)

Netherlands	3.3	
Denmark	3.4	(March 2007)
Ireland	4.0	
Cyprus	4.4	
Austria	4.5	
Estonia	4.7	
Slovenia	4.8	
Luxembourg	4.9	
Lithuania		5.4
UK	5.4	(February 2007)
Latvia		5.8
Czech Republic	6.1	
Sweden	6.2	(provisional)
Malta	6.4	
Italy	6.5	(fourth quarter 2006)
Finland	6.6	
Germany		6.7 (provisional)
Romania	7.2	
Bulgaria	7.5	
Belgium	7.6	
Portugal	8.0	
Spain		8.2
Hungary	8.2	
Greece		8.6 (fourth quarter 2006)
France	8.6	(see note below)
Slovakia	10.5	
Poland		11.2
Euro zone	7.1	
EU-27	7.1	

Note: Estimates for France are based on results of the Labor Force Survey that are provisional and may be subject to revision later

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this year.

18. The monthly rates and numbers of unemployed are estimated and based on data from the EU labor force survey. The estimated rates may differ from national unemployment rates due to differences in methods and definitions of unemployment. Unemployed people according to ILO criteria are those aged 15 and over who:

-- Are without work;

-- Are available to start work within the next two weeks; and

-- Have actively sought employment at some time during the previous four weeks.

GRAY